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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001102

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/02/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: RULING AK PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP SLOWLY ERODING

REF: A. ANKARA 911

[B](#). ANKARA 1074

(U) Classified by Political Counselor John Kunstadter, E.O. 12958, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#). (U) With the March 1 resignation from Turkish Prime Minister's ruling Justice and Development (AK) party of controversial Istanbul MP Goksal Kucukali, the distribution of seats in the Turkish Parliament stands as follows:

363 - AKP (Justice and Development Party)

170 - CHP (Republican People's Party)

6 - DYP (True Path Party)

1 - HYP (Rise of the People Party)

9 - Independent

[2](#). (U) Since February 15, four AKP parliamentarians have resigned, including Culture and Tourism Minister Mumcu (ref A).

[3](#). (C) There is still no viable political alternative to AKP or Erdogan in the near term. However, several trends will govern Turkey's near-term domestic political landscape:

-- AK's power in Parliament will continue to erode at a slow, minimal but steady pace.

-- The complex fault lines inside AKP, which revolve around both personalities and political preferences, will deepen.

-- When dissatisfied AKP members see a viable political alternative, the pace of defections will pick up.

[4](#). (C) Comment: In the two weeks since Mumcu resigned, Erdogan has failed to re-set AK on a sustainable course. He has not chosen an EU negotiator, and Turkey's EU candidacy is adrift (ref B). He has not reshuffled his cabinet. He has done nothing we can see to address issues in U.S./Turkish relations. And he has done nothing to re-assert control within AK and woo back dissatisfied party members. Instead, Erdogan took a February 15-17 trip to Albania and Bosnia; today, he is in Ethiopia, en route to South Africa. Turkey's domestic politics are in for an extended period of unclarity. End Comment.

EDELMAN